



**U.S. Department of Justice
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MICHAEL STEVEN FINDER SENTENCED IN U.S. DISTRICT COURT

Bill Mercer, United States Attorney for the District of Montana, announced today that during a federal court session in Missoula, on July 11, 2008, before U.S. District Judge Donald W. Molloy, MICHAEL STEVEN FINDER, a 47-year-old resident of Butte, appeared for sentencing. FINDER was sentenced to a term of:

- ! Prison: 72 months
- ! Special Assessment: \$100
- ! Forfeiture: computer equipment
- ! Supervised Release: lifetime

FINDER was sentenced in connection with his guilty plea to receipt of child pornography.

In an Offer of Proof filed by the United States, the government stated it would have proved at trial the following:

The Wyoming Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force initiated an undercover operation targeting peer-to-peer file sharing networks offering child pornography. Between

September 2006 and February 2007, a computer utilizing the IP addresses assigned to FINDER at his Butte residence had images and movies of child pornography available to other peer-to-peer users.

On April 6, 2007, agents with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) executed a search warrant at FINDER'S residence. FINDER was interviewed and stated that he had owned the computer in his bedroom for three years and that he had used peer-to-peer software since 2004. FINDER also stated that his computer was password protected and the only other person who used his computer was his nephew, but that he was not allowed to use the peer-to-peer software. FINDER further stated that he did view movies that he knew were illegal and claimed that after he viewed the illegal movies he attempted to delete them but they kept "showing back up on his computer."

Also recovered during the search were various items of computer equipment. A forensic analysis of FINDER'S computer found numerous images and movies of child pornography, including images of known victims. Some of the children depicted in the images and movies were clearly less than age 12 or prepubescent, and/or were engaged in sadism or masochism or other depictions of violence. The movie titles were clearly indicative of child pornography.

Because there is no parole in the federal system, the "truth in sentencing" guidelines mandate that FINDER will likely serve **all** of the time imposed by the court. In the federal system, FINDER does have the opportunity to earn a sentence reduction for "good behavior." However, this reduction will not exceed 15% of the overall sentence.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Marcia K. Hurd prosecuted the case for the United States.

The investigation was a cooperative effort between the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Montana Division of Criminal Investigation.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, the Department of Justice launched Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys' Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov/.